

Dr. Jessica Saalfield

Assistant Professor Tenure-Line

Psychology

Title of your research project.

Assessing the Alcohol Culture on Small, Rural College Campuses

Description of research. Please provide a few sentences that explain the question and the methods employed in this research project.

This comprehensive research project will provide much-needed empirical information about alcohol use and misuse, including addressing the motivators, risk factors, and effects of the Covid-19 pandemic among students attending small, rural colleges. Using community-based methods, the proposed study will utilize semi-structured interviews with students currently attending small, rural colleges to establish foundational knowledge about the drinking culture for this underserved population and will be used to develop a culturally sensitive supplemental alcohol use survey. The survey will be implemented on a large-scale across multiple geographically diverse campuses, producing data that could lead to alcohol prevention and intervention campaigns for students attending small, rural colleges. The goals of the study are to better understand the attitudes, motivations, and behaviors surrounding alcohol at these campuses as well as identify students most at risk for alcohol misuse.

Did this project include Penn State students as researchers?

Yes

If yes to the above question, please state where it was published.

N/A

What problem do you address with your research?

There is a paucity of research examining rates of substance use and misuse in rural areas, including among students attending small, rural colleges. There is a need to characterize the alcohol culture at these small, rural campuses in order to create better prevention and intervention strategies to target this unique population.